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REPAIR THAT FARM MACHINERY NOW

A discussion by R. B. Gray, Chief, Division of Farm Power and Machines, Agricultural Research Administration, and John Baker, Chief, Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Recorded January 9, 1946. Time: 7 minutes, 7 seconds, without announcer's parts.

ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

OPENING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

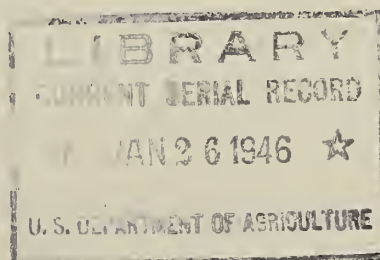
Maybe you're the sort of farmer who puts all his machinery away in good working order. Thoroughly cleaned and new parts ordered . . . in fact, everything so shipshape there's little to do to get the equipment ready for spring work. But, in case you were busy last fall, and didn't get this job done the way you wanted to, here are some reminders of what your equipment may need in the way of repair work, and how little time's left to do the job. John Baker of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, is talking the situation over with R. B. Gray, one of the agricultural engineers at the Department's research laboratories. By transcription, let's listen in.

CLOSING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

The folks you heard, Friends, were R. B. Gray, Chief of the Farm Power and Machine Division, and John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service, of the United States Department of Agriculture

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TRANSCRIPTION:

- BAKER: Roy, I'm going to pretend we've got our overalls on...and get right down to earth for this check-up on putting farm machinery in good order for next season's work...
- GRAY: Go ahead, John...pretend we're down at the barn, if you want to...
- BAKER: Fine. We'll take the equipment piece by piece...the tractor, the manure spreader, the plow...go right down the list and see what the doctor orders... except in this case it's what the engineer orders. But first, there's something I'm a little curious about...
- GRAY: What is it?
- BAKER: Well...the war taught us a lot of new tricks...too bad it took a war to do it...but still some of them are going to help us a lot in the future. In connection with farm machinery, I'm thinking about the new method of spraying to prevent rust that was developed during the war...
- GRAY: That rust preventer is certainly better than smearing things up with axle grease...
- BAKER: You can just spray a thin coating of this stuff over the plow bottom and there you are...
- GRAY: Or brush it on, if you want to.
- BAKER: During the war there wasn't much of it for civilians, but it's on the market now?
- GRAY: Yes, most oil dealers have some...and any farmer should be able to get it where he buys his oil.
- BAKER: And you'd give everything around the farm that's likely to rust a good dose of it?
- GRAY: I certainly would...the harrow, discs, the planter shovels, the fertilizer drills, the mattocks, the hoes...everything.
- BAKER: Right on through to the garden tools?
- GRAY: Right on through to the garden tools...I wouldn't slight any equipment with parts that suffer from rust.
- BAKER: Let's take the stuff you'd find on the average general farm, and talk about what to look for to keep it in good condition...

GRAY: On keeping equipment in good condition, may I say something right here?

BAKER: Yes, indeed...

GRAY: Well, of course, keeping farm machinery in good condition is always a paying proposition. But during the war it simply had to be done, because usually you couldn't go to town and buy a new machine if you wanted to. And help was so scarce, your machinery was absolutely essential to produce the food we needed. The war's over now...but we still need to produce a lot of food, machinery's still scarce, and in many cases, so is labor...

BAKER: And farmers may be almost as dependent on the machinery they have on the place now, as they were during the war.

GRAY: That's the way it looks. And the best way I know to short-cut on labor is to have every piece of equipment in good working order.

BAKER: All right...shall we start our check-up with the tractor?

GRAY: If it has rubber tires and you haven't been using it...I hope it's blocked up.

BAKER: Yep...

GRAY: Did you put in anti-freeze this year?

BAKER: No...I just put it in the shed and drained off the water.

GRAY: Well, in any case, the radiator ought to be flushed out...and the distributor points cleaned. Think you'll need a new oil filter?

BAKER: Seems to me we had a new one last year.

GRAY: It's not a bad idea to have a new oil filter every spring...

BAKER: All right, Doctor! Next trip to town, I'll get a new oil filter for the tractor.

GRAY: And don't forget the oil filter...it may need cleaning. How about tuning up the motor...think it needs it?

BAKER: Probably does...

GRAY: Then, you'd better see the service man, and make a date to have it done. His list is likely to be pretty long this year, and you don't want to find yourself at the bottom of it.

BAKER: That's right...I'd probably be needing the tractor before he got to me.

GRAY: And if the tractor breaks down, and you lose a lot of time from spring plowing...

BAKER: I'll be calling myself names for not seeing my service man early.

GRAY: And getting nowhere fast.

BAKER: I'll call that service man today!

GRAY: Now on the early machines...you may already be using the manure spreader.

BAKER: Not yet...but that reminds me it needs a good cleaning and oiling.

GRAY: And maybe some new bearings...

BAKER: I'll have to look about the bearings.

GRAY: And how about chains...any weak places in the chains?

BAKER: Something else I'll have to look about. And I'll do it right away so I can get an early order in if I need any new parts. There's a manure loader, too...we made it.

GRAY: Lots of farmers did that during the war. A manure loader...home-made or otherwise...is a good thing, if you use it carefully and safely. Have to watch the cables pretty closely for any weak spots.

BAKER: You can say that again. We haven't had any accidents so far, but we don't want any. I'll check over the cables and all the moving parts myself. And that reminds me...there're some missing bolts in the plows. I've got some new bolts on hand, so that's just a matter of getting around to doing the job.

GRAY: You'll want to check the beams and frames, too...to see if they're in proper alignment. How about the cutting edges on your plow shares...any of them dull or worn out?

BAKER: I'm afraid so...

GRAY: Then you shouldn't wait too long to get them sharpened or order new ones...to be sure to have them when you need 'em. The same thing's true of harrows...if any harrow teeth are worn or missing, you'll want to put in new ones.

BAKER: And worn-out discs and broken bolts will have to be replaced...

GRAY: And don't forget gang bolts...tighten 'em good. Also, you'll want to check over the bearings and oil cups very carefully, and replace missing grease couplings.

BAKER: Work and more work...

GRAY: But, in the end, you save work...and often money.

BAKER: Sure, sure. I suppose I'll have to get some new planter plates too...we bent a couple planting corn last year.

GRAY: Well, if a planter plate doesn't fit solid, it certainly will pay to get a new one. I hope all the shoes and disc openers on the planter are clean and shining. And of course you'll want to check the covers.

BAKER: Except for the plates, I think the planter's in pretty good shape. But, I am worrying about the fertilizer attachment. It wasn't in such good shape ...and I hope it's not corroded so badly, it's frozen. ...

GRAY: If you find it is frozen, get to work on it as soon as you can with some good, penetrating oil, or kerosene. Otherwise, you'll take a wrench to it next spring, and the first thing you know you'll break something. Then, you'll be off to town in a cloud of dust, and getting further and further behind with the spring work every minute.

BAKER: You said it that time, Brother.

GRAY: Now, binders and combines are not early machines, but it's a good thing to have them in mind, to see if there's canvas to repair or replace...and you may find a slat or two missing...

BAKER: Probably will...

GRAY: Of course, you keep all the wooden parts of your equipment painted?

BAKER: I try to...

GRAY: I know farmers have been terribly busy for a long time now, but still if there's any way to find time to keep up the painting jobs on machinery, it's worth it.

BAKER: I try to keep all the machinery under cover.

GRAY: I think most good farmers do. If equipment is left out in the open, then the maintenance work on it is more important than ever. There's more of it to do...

BAKER: In the Dakotas and Nebraska...where the climate is dry...farmers don't have to be so careful about housing their equipment. They can leave it out, where farmers in humid climates can't.

GRAY: Well...like a lot of other things, that's a relative matter.

BAKER: Meaning?

GRAY: Meaning how long it'll take to wear a machine out. On some of those High Plains farms where a machine really gets heavy use, they wear it out in two or three years. Then, of course, housing is not so important. But most farm machinery lasts from 10 to 20 years. And I'd house it if I possibly could...whether I was in the Dakotas or in Georgia.

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

A transcribed talk by John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Recorded January 9, 1946. Time: 5 minutes, without announcer's parts.

ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

OPENING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

And now let's have a report on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. This is the first of the United Nations groups to reach a permanent status. And from time to time we want to tell you something about what FAO is doing...and how it affects farmers in the United States. To give you a report today, here's John Baker of the United States Department of Agriculture...by transcription from Washington.

CLOSING

ANNOUNCER:(LIVE):

That was John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service of the United States Department of Agriculture...reporting on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

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THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

A transcribed talk by John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Recorded January 9, 1946. Time 5 minutes, without announcer's parts.

Much of the agricultural news nowadays has to do with efforts to avoid the kind of trouble that the world's farmers and consumers got into after the last war. Not all of those efforts make headlines. The chances are that you have not heard a lot about the Food and Agriculture Organization. It's commonly called FAO.

It was established only last fall, and it is the very first of the permanent organizations by which the United Nations plan to keep the peace and make the peace worth keeping. The Department of Agriculture and other agencies of government are preparing to work closely with FAO and help it succeed in its two chief aims.

FAO has two great aims. One is to improve the living levels of food producers -- that is, farmers, forest workers and fishermen -- all over the world. The other is to raise levels of nutrition to a point where finally everyone in the world will have enough food to eat -- and the right kind of food. Progress along these two lines will help to solve the old riddle of hunger amidst plenty.

Week by week FAO is quietly and steadily going ahead with its work in its temporary headquarters in Washington. The permanent headquarters, incidentally, will be wherever the over-all United Nations Organization establishes itself. Already FAO is well along in its first task, that of building a staff. The Director General is Sir John Orr of Scotland, a famous human and animal nutritionist. It was his policies that had so much to do with keeping the British people well nourished during the lean days of the war. Sir John is a successful farmer too. For many years he has operated a large general farm which he owns in Scotland.

FAO is also making good progress on its first project -- that of making a balance sheet of food needs and production. The picture is being made up country by country on a world-wide basis, and will be a starting point for FAO's recommendations to its member governments.

Technically speaking, FAO is not an action agency, but it plans to do a great deal more than collect and publish information. Its recommendations, for instance, are expected to be very detailed and to the point, and they will carry weight. Forty-two nations already are members of the organization. In addition, FAO will offer help in carrying out its recommendations. It will organize missions of experts to assist countries that want aid in increasing production of certain products, in establishing better nutrition programs, or in other such useful enterprises.

This country is a charter member of FAO. President Truman sent a special message to the Quebec Conference where FAO was organized. Secretary Anderson signed the FAO constitution on behalf of the United States. Since last October full participation in the work of FAO has been part of our national agricultural policy, and our general foreign policy. Just what does this mean to farmers and other citizens?

For one thing, it is likely that we will profit somewhat by the exchange of information on the best methods of production and marketing and use of food. There is still much we can learn from other countries. In the long run, of course, we will probably give more than we receive in the exchange of this kind of information.

Our great problem is one of markets and that is where FAO can help us a great deal. The information that can be developed on where different kinds of food are needed and the recommendations that FAO may make toward getting world trade to flow more freely will in themselves be most useful. More than that, if we are able, through FAO, to help other countries become more productive and raise their living levels, they will be able to buy more goods from us, including farm products. There is no reason to be afraid of serious competition from any of these countries as they learn how to increase their farm output. At best it will be many years before they can come even near meeting the barest needs of their own people.

Sir Girja Bajpai, who was India's representative to the Conference, made that point clear with just one figure; the average income of a farm family in India -- and the great majority of people there are farmers -- is \$22.50 a year. With incomes like that they aren't buying from us now when they need food so badly.

But even above all these economic possibilities, the greatest possibilities of FAO lie in working as one of a group of United Nations organizations toward a peaceful, neighborly world. FAO's particular contribution will be to help farmers and other food producers to live better and all people to eat better.